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THE CONDOR

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Western Ornithology

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EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

Gilbert White, in his *Natural History of Selbourne*, wrote under date of September 14, 1770: "Monographers, come from whence they may, have, I think, fair pretense to challenge some regard and approbation from all the lovers of natural history; for, as no man can alone investigate all the works of nature, these partial writers may, each in their department, be more accurate in their discoveries, and freer from errors, than more general writers; and so by degrees may pave the way to an universal correct natural history." Which is to say, welcome the specialist, who is most likely to furnish accurate information.

Examination of a number of local lists in several of the current ornithological magazines reveals a regrettable looseness in the matter of recording facts of avian occurrence. It would seem superfluous to emphasize the necessity of giving *exact* dates of both the first arrival and average arrival, of species, and similarly with departures. Such phrases as "first of March" and "latter part of February" have relatively little value. If the notes given in local lists are to prove worthy to be gathered together for

basis of generalizations in the future, they must provide definite as well as truthful statements of fact.

As one reads current literature in ornithology he frequently encounters articles in which the author has evidently made little or no effort to post himself in regard to the previous literature pertaining to his subject. Nothing seems more depressing than to find an author launching supposedly new facts, when the same ground may have been covered, and perhaps much better, by some student not so very long before. New forms of birds, even, have been described without reference to previous systematic discussions in the same group. Comments are made with naivete, which certainly will not reflect credit upon the authors as their work comes to take its place in perspective with the passage of time. The moral of all this is that prospective authors should go through at least the more important indexes relating to their region (if faunal work is contemplated) or subjects. The indexes available, annual and periodical, for *The Auk* and *The Condor*, should be habitually appealed to, as well as the chief general works on ornithology.

Through the energetic efforts of Mr. C. B. Lastreto and other bird students of the San Francisco Bay region there has recently been formed an "Audubon Association of the Pacific" with headquarters in San Francisco. On Friday evening, February 2, permanent organization was effected, a constitution and by-laws adopted, and officers elected. Mr. C. B. Lastreto is President, Mr. W. A. Squires, Secretary, and Mr. Harold E. Hansen, Treasurer. The Association begins with a good strong charter membership and expects to be active along the lines usually followed by Audubon societies. Information may be secured from the Secretary, Mr. W. A. Squires, 3852 Twenty-third Street, San Francisco.

The second annual meeting of the Pacific Division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science will be held this year at Stanford University during the period from April 4 to 7. It is planned that Cooper Club representatives be present and take an active part in those sessions where topics of an ornithological nature can be considered. One feature which promises more than ordinary interest is the zoological field trip scheduled for Saturday, April 7. Professor J. O. Snyder will be in charge of this, and of course birds will receive a large share of attention. If it proves not feasible for any Cooper Club member to attend the entire meeting, special effort should be made to take in at least this one day's field trip. In this connection, it is to be pointed out that the Cooper Club is an organization affiliated with the Pacific Division, and Club members can still join the American Association under the advantageous conditions obtaining last year.